

Amended Claims  
of June 25, 2004

1. A panel element having a utilization side (11), a counter draw (12) opposite the utilization side (11), a first longitudinal side (13) having a tongue (2), a second longitudinal side (14) which is located opposite the first longitudinal side (13) and has a groove (3) with a contour opposite to that of tongue (2), tongue (2) having a first projection (21) extending beyond the utilization side (11) in a first direction parallel to the utilization side (11) and normal to the longitudinal direction of tongue (2), tongue (2) having in the region of the counter draw (12) a second projection (22) extending in the first direction, a first undercut (23) being formed between the first projection (21) and the second projection (22) and at least a first region (25) of the second projection (22) having a distance from the tongue-side edge (18) of the utilization side (11) which is smaller than that of a second region (26) of the first undercut (23), in the first direction, the first region (25) being farther away from the panel element than the second region (26), characterized in that the second projection (22) of tongue (2) can be locked with groove (3) of another similar panel element by an audible and noticeable click.

2. The panel element according to claim 1, characterized in that the first undercut (23) has a constriction in its opening (24) region.

3. The panel element according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that in the second direction normal to the utilization side (11) tongue (2) has at least an extension (27) and/or a second undercut (28).

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4. The panel element according to claim 3, characterized in that the first projection (21) comprises the extension (27) and/or the second undercut (28).
5. The panel element according to claim 3 or 4, characterized in that the first undercut (23) and the second undercut (28) are merged.
6. The panel element according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that when tongue (2) is connected with groove (3) of another similar panel element, tongue (2) and groove (3) have at least five contact points (41, 42, 43, 44, 45) for power transmission.
7. The panel element according to any one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that when the tongue (2) is locked with groove (3) of another similar panel element, tongue (2) and/or groove (3) is (are) deformed semi-plastically.
8. The panel element according to claim 7, characterized in that when tongue (2) is connected with groove (3) of another similar panel element the semi-plastic deformation is at least partially reconverted.
9. The panel element according to any one of the previous claims, characterized in that longitudinal sides (13, 14) and/or face sides (15, 16) are at least partially treated, in particular sprayed, coated or the like, with a hydrophobic agent.
10. The panel element according to any one of the previous claims, characterized in that glue channels (61, 62) form

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when tongue (2) is connected with groove (3) of another similar panel element.

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